

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 12, 2003

Senate Joint Resolution

No. 6

Introduced by Senator Soto

(Principal coauthor: Senator Torlakson)

**(Coauthors: Senators Bowen, Ducheny, Kuehl, Machado, Morrow,
and Romero)**

**(Coauthors: Assembly Members Chavez, Diaz, Dutton, Frommer,
Koretz, Laird, Leno, Lieber, and Pavley)**

February 3, 2003

Senate Joint Resolution No. 6—Relative to emergency services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 6, as amended, Soto. First responder training.

This measure would call upon *the Congress* ~~and the President~~ of the United States to provide *additional* funding to the states for first responder training as part of homeland security funding.

Fiscal committee: yes.

- 1 WHEREAS, The devastating September 11, 2001, attacks in
2 New York and Washington, D.C., changed the way our nation
3 thinks about terrorism. Those attacks, during which hundreds of
4 police officers, firefighters, and other emergency personnel died
5 (along with thousands of civilians), emphasized the need for all
6 levels of government to devote additional resources and devise
7 creative new strategies toward preventing future attacks on United
8 States soil; and
9 WHEREAS, The first line of defense in protecting life and
10 property often falls to the states and local communities; and

1 WHEREAS, Police officers and firefighters are often the first
2 to arrive at the scene of an emergency or disaster, and every day,
3 many of these dedicated “first responders” place themselves in
4 harm’s way to save the lives of others—~~hundreds died on September~~
5 *countless others; and*

6 WHEREAS, *Hundreds of these first responders died on*
7 *September 11 so that thousands could live; and*

8 WHEREAS, Because terrorist attacks or natural disasters could
9 strike at any time, having adequate numbers of these first
10 responders available will be critical to forestalling and minimizing
11 the potential loss of life in possible future attacks, as well as
12 meeting the challenges of other types of emergencies or natural
13 disasters; and

14 WHEREAS, Many regions of California face an acute shortage
15 of trained paramedics, who are often called upon to administer
16 sophisticated, life-saving medical care to the victims of
17 emergencies or disasters; and

18 WHEREAS, Experience has shown that by training firefighters
19 to perform as paramedics and thus providing them with additional
20 tools to assist in emergencies and disasters, the loss of life can be
21 minimized; and

22 WHEREAS, In January 2002, President George W. Bush told
23 an audience of mayors and other local government officials
24 ~~gathered at the White House that he would commit more than \$1~~
25 ~~billion for first responder training as part of his Homeland Security~~
26 ~~legislative package. “Your police forces, your emergency medical~~
27 ~~gathered at the White House that “Your police forces, your~~
28 ~~emergency medical teams, your fire fighters ... are responsible for~~
29 ~~the first response on any terrorist attack, and are responsible for~~
30 ~~saving lives. The first minutes or hours after an attack, are the most~~
31 ~~hopeful minutes for saving lives,” the President told the local~~
32 ~~officials; and saving lives.” The President told the local officials~~
33 ~~that he wanted to commit \$3.5 billion to first responder~~
34 ~~preparedness, including \$1.1 billion to train firefighters, police,~~
35 ~~and emergency technicians to cope with future terrorist attacks;~~
36 *and*

37 WHEREAS, It has been the expressed desire of the Legislature
38 and Governor of the State of California to ensure that our state is
39 properly prepared and adequately staffed with trained first
40 responders, including a plan to use some of the promised federal

1 Homeland Security funds allocated to California for paramedic
2 training for firefighters; and

3 ~~WHEREAS, The legislation approved by Congress and signed~~
4 ~~into law by the President in November 2002, contained no~~
5 ~~provision for first responder training; now, therefore, be it~~

6 *WHEREAS, The recent spending package approved by*
7 *Congress and signed by President Bush in February failed to*
8 *provide adequate funding for first responder preparedness. Even*
9 *though he signed the legislation, President Bush said the amount*
10 *of money devoted to counter-terrorism was a “disappointment”;*
11 *now, therefore, be it*

12 *Resolved by the Senate and Assembly of the State of California,*
13 *jointly, That the Legislature of the State of California reaffirms its*
14 *commitment to strengthening our cities and counties as the first*
15 *line of defense of our people, and to giving our firefighters the*
16 *training they need to provide critical care in disasters or*
17 *emergencies; and be it further*

18 *Resolved, That because the severe budget crisis in California*
19 *and other states limits the states’ ability to provide such necessary*
20 *training to protect citizens, the Legislature of the State of*
21 ~~*California calls upon Congress and the President of the United*~~
22 ~~*States to fulfill the pledge to provide badly needed funding to the*~~
23 *California calls upon the Congress of the United States to provide*
24 *badly needed additional funding to the states for first responder*
25 *training. Fulfilling this the President’s pledge would be a low-cost*
26 *way to help make the homeland more secure; and be it further*

27 *Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of*
28 *this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United*
29 *States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Majority*
30 *Leader of the Senate, and each Senator and Representative from*
31 *California in Congress.*